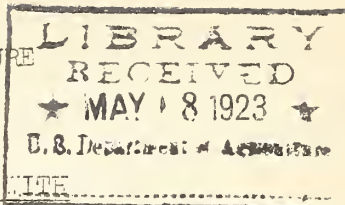


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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY



DIRECTIONS FOR TREATING RODENT BURROWS WITH
HYDROCYANIC-ACID GAS.

Attempts to destroy animal pests in their burrows with methods usually employed do not always meet with satisfactory results. Where a more deadly and quicker acting gas than carbon bisulphide is required hydrocyanic-acid gas is well adapted for use. The extremely poisonous nature of this gas must be well understood, however, and none other than responsible and intelligent persons should be permitted to use it. By observing closely the following directions and by exercising due care there should be no hesitancy in using this method out-of-doors and there will be no great danger in its use.

For Rat Burrows:

1. Put half a teaspoonful (about 30 drops) of water into a small vial or bottle with a wide mouth. For this measuring a medicine dropper may be used.
2. Add about half this amount (15 drops) of sulphuric acid.
3. Hold the vial directly over the entrance of the burrow.
4. Drop 10 to 15 Grains of sodium cyanide (a piece about the size of a navy bean) into the dilute acid in the vial.
5. Release the vial immediately, allowing it to slip down the burrow.
6. Seal the entrance of the burrow with sod or moist earth at once.
7. Quickly close all other entrances from which gas is seen emerging.

For Woodchuck and Other Deep Burrows:

Follow directions as for rat burrows but use about one ounce of water, half an ounce of sulphuric acid, and about one-tenth of an ounce of sodium cyanide, or three to four times as much as for rats. Tin cans may be used

instead of bottles, in which case it is well to pour the water and sulphuric acid into the can and then place it well down into the burrow. The sodium cyanide is then added and the entrance quickly closed, taking care that no dirt falls into the open can.

For other deep-burrowing animals the same directions are applicable, using ingredients in proportion to the size and extent of the burrows.

CAUTION.- The danger attending the careless use of hydrocyanic-acid gas can not be over-emphasized. Hydrocyanic-acid gas is fatal to human beings when breathed in quantity, while sodium cyanide and sulphuric acid are also very poisonous. The sodium cyanide, while in a dry state, may be handled without danger if there be no wound on the hand. Care must be taken in handling the acid to avoid burning the skin and clothing. The acid should always be poured into the water as it may be spattered if the operation is reversed.

